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POLITICS

EXCLUSIVE: Inside A Taxpayer-Funded Think Tank's Aborted Rebellion Against DOGE

(Photo by Leigh Vogel/Getty Images)

DAILY CALLER NEWS FOUNDATION

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The U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) launched a chaotic, short-lived rebellion against Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) on Monday, sabotaging their own building and communications infrastructure in a failed attempt to resist a Trump administration takeover, sources exclusively told the Daily Caller News Foundation.

The standoff stemmed from President Donald Trump's Feb. 19 executive order demanding the dramatic downsizing of numerous federally-funded organizations, explicitly requiring USIP to reduce its operations and personnel to the minimum levels required by law. The administration determined the institute's leadership, under George Moose, was not complying with this directive, leading Trump to replace Moose with senior USAID official Kenneth Jackson on Friday. (**RELATED: DOGE Deposes US Institute Of Peace Leadership After Failing To Institute Peace**)

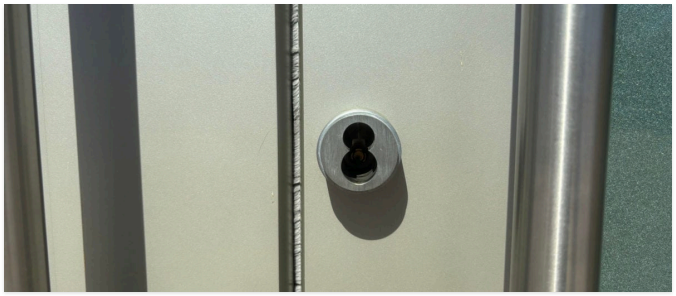
> *Mr. Moose denied lawful access to Kenneth Jackson, the Acting USIP President (as approved by the USIP Board). @DCPoliceDept arrived onsite and escorted Mr. Jackson into the building. The only unlawful individual was Mr. Moose, who refused to comply, and even tried to fire USIP's... https://t.co/Fy8hJClx9E pic.twitter.com/yqq81qNKXM*

— Department of Government Efficiency (@DOGE) March 18, 2025

USIP leadership orchestrated extensive internal sabotage before DOGE personnel arrived to implement Trump's mandated leadership changes, according to a Trump administration official involved in the USIP leadership transition who requested anonymity.

Contrary to earlier reporting by The Washington Post and The New York Times, which claimed the institute merely locked its doors, photographic evidence exclusively obtained by the DCNF shows locks had been physically removed from the exterior doors, effectively destroying entry mechanisms. The official said USIP staff removed the locks.

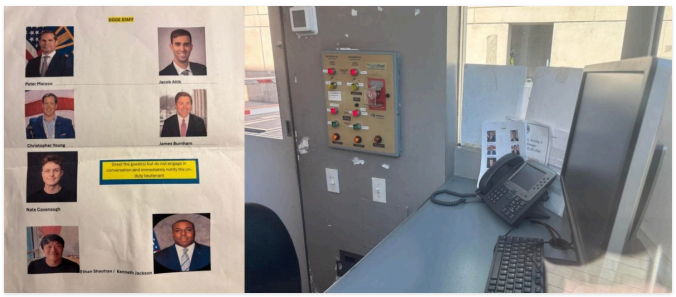
Moreover, staff contacted Washington's Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) in an attempt to prevent DOGE personnel from entering, citing barricaded doors and security concerns. MPD officers later confirmed these obstructions upon arrival, further discrediting claims that USIP had only engaged in passive resistance. Much of USIP's leadership, including Moose, barricaded themselves on the building's fifth floor, closing window shades and blocking access points in a last-ditch effort to resist DOGE's entry, the official told the DCNF.



A photograph of a destroyed manual locking mechanism on a first-floor door taken outside of the U.S. Institute for Peace (USIP) headquarters on March 18, 2025, in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Thomas English/Daily Caller News Foundation)

The obstruction didn't end at damaged doors. Prior to Monday's confrontation, USIP leaders disabled telephone lines, internet connections and other IT infrastructure, forcing communication among staff through walkie-talkies, according to the official. This deliberate effort to disrupt operations delayed DOGE's entry and added to the confusion during Monday's standoff.

Flyers distributed internally further revealed an organized, premeditated resistance strategy. "Greet the guest(s) but do not engage in conversation and immediately notify the on-duty lieutenant," read the flyers, referring explicitly to anticipated DOGE officials, photos and names of whom were included. The DCNF exclusively obtained one such flyer, including a photograph of it sitting inside a security guard booth outside the building. These flyers were posted throughout the facility in the lead-up to Monday's confrontation, the official said.



(Left) A photo of a flyer distributed widely throughout the U.S. Institute of Peace headquarters ahead of the Trump administration's arrival. (Right) The same flyer pictured propped against the window of a security guard booth outside USIP's headquarters, both taken on March 18, 2025 in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Thomas English/Daily Caller News Foundation)

Further reinforcing the deliberate, calculated nature of the rebellion, an internal memo from Feb. 6 titled "External Agency Visitor Procedure," also obtained exclusively by the DCNF, outlined detailed contingency plans for resisting the Trump

administration's attempts at a leadership transition. The document asserts USIP's discretion over its own facilities, security protocols and access control, buttressing the leadership's belief that they could reject external overseers.

It also postulates the institute's control over its own physical infrastructure, implying leadership believed they had the authority to disable security systems, destroy locks and otherwise render the building inoperable as a means of resistance. The document confirms advanced planning more than ten days before Trump's inciting executive order, contradicting the outward appearance of Monday's showdown as a spontaneous and purely reactionary resistance.

The opening salvo of the executive branch-USIP clash came Friday night when Jackson, the newly appointed USIP president, arrived at headquarters with DOGE staffers and FBI agents to enforce Trump's leadership changes, the official said. A USIP lawyer, apparently recognizing a few faces from the flyer, carped that the order was unlawful and invalid, prompting the Trump officials to withdraw for the night. Over the weekend, Moose and other USIP leaders intensified their resistance plot by holding an emergency meeting, firing the institute's security contractors (a company called Inter-Con) to block DOGE access — a move the administration official said was illegal — and implementing lockdown measures, including removing the electronic access systems Inter-Con employees used to enter as well as destroying physical locks entirely, the official told the DCNF. Inter-Con declined to comment.

By Monday afternoon, DOGE personnel returned to USIP headquarters and were denied entry, prompting institute staff to call MPD. The staff expected police officers to side with them against the Trump administration's takeover attempt — instead, MPD officers arrived in response to a complaint from the U.S. Attorney for D.C. Ed Martin's office, which had alerted them to reports of noncompliance at the institute's headquarters, according to the police report. MPD officers entered the facility through emergency stairs after encountering drawn window shades and barricaded doors on the building's fifth floor, eventually escorting Moose and other holdout staff off the premises. The U.S. Attorney's Office declined to comment.

"Eleven board members were lawfully removed, and remaining board members appointed Kenneth Jackson acting president," Anna Kelly, White House deputy press secretary, previously told the DCNF. "Rogue bureaucrats will not be allowed to hold agencies hostage. The Trump administration will enforce the President's executive authority and ensure his agencies remain accountable to the American people."

Initial reporting by The New York Times suggested ongoing FBI involvement Monday, though the Trump administration official explicitly refuted this, confirming FBI agents were present only briefly during the initial Friday evening attempt to enforce compliance.

After suffering a decisive rout in Monday's standoff, former USIP leadership regrouped Wednesday to file a lawsuit against the Trump administration, seeking to overturn the takeover and reinstate its ousted leadership. The complaint claimed that DOGE officials "plundered" USIP offices — while USIP's approach, according to the official, involved deliberately damaging their own facilities by removing locks, disabling infrastructure and generally reducing their workplace to a dysfunctional shell.

USIP, established by Congress in 1984, claims its mission is to "prevent violent conflicts and broker peace deals abroad," despite the U.S. having been involved in numerous military interventions, prolonged wars and rising global instability in the decades since. More recently, the institute requested $55,459,000 for its fiscal year 2025 budget to "promote global peace and security," according to its website.

This clash represents a uniquely dramatic example of bureaucratic defiance against presidential mandates — defiance that, despite meticulous planning and internal coordination, dissolved the moment police arrived to install their lawful replacements. By Monday evening, Jackson and other Trump-appointed leadership had assumed unquestioned control over the Institute of Peace, rendering the resistance efforts of its former stewards futile.

Neither USIP's press office nor the Institute of Politics at Harvard University, where Moose is an adjunct professor, responded to the DCNF's requests for comment.

Editor's note: This story has been updated to include additional information regarding the legal response from former USIP employees to the Trump administration.

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ALittleWiserNow
1 day ago
So file criminal charges. They essentially took the building hostage and destroyed property. Both of those actions are criminal.
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SGT_Wombat
21 hours ago
Start putting some of these bureaucrats in jail and soon they rest will accept their fate.
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BlueBoomerang
1 day ago
Criminal prosecution is needed to not only give these people the punishment they deserve, but to also send a message to other liberal extremists who have similar plans to disrupt our government.
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Dave Slough
18 hours ago
All these people should have their pay or pensions garnished to pay for the damage to the building
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Liberals are worthless idiots
1 day ago
Every single one who participated in this should have to pay for the damages they caused - personally. As taxpayers, that's OUR money, OUR building & OUR property. If you damage/deface

OUR things, you have to pay for it, not US. They should be sued in federal court and prosecuted criminally as well....
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J **JBinCO**
1 day ago
Hmm, sounds an awful lot like the Democrats' definition of an insurrection, doesn't it? And by that standard, it should draw some serious jail time - at least a few months while they await trial...
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1 reply

Frank Atwood
23 hours ago
The deep state in neither left wing or right wing. It's bureaucracy and bureaucrats. They consider politicians as the temporary help, and they are the true masters of the country.
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CH **Caught Dead Handed**
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To be fair.....the right never though to collaborate with known foreign US enemies to infiltrate and control US government in return for a few bucks.
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TS **The Skipper**
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SACRAMENTO — Days after telling lawmakers that he took out a $3.4-billion loan to pay for Medi-Cal costs through March, Gov. Gavin Newsom's office said Monday that he's asking the state Legislature to approve another $2.8 billion in extra funding for the healthcare program for low-income California...
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Gov. DeSantis is tickling the phone receiver just waiting for the call ...

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It seems they weren't very good at the whole peace thing anyway. But I'm sure they all got very rich off of our tax dollars.
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P **PurpleCarrot**
1 day ago
The world has been on fire for the last 4 years and I never even heard of these people. Pull all tax funding. End of story. Stop funding Think Tanks.
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23 hours ago

Barricading the doors to resist an audit is an enormous red flag.

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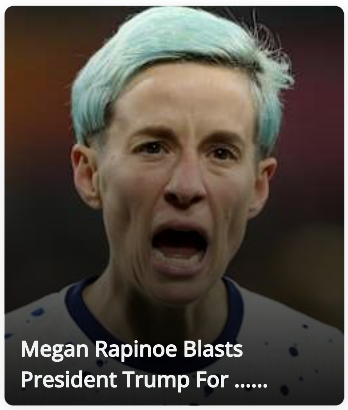

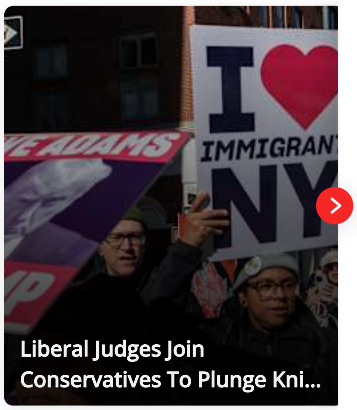

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